

# 17<sup>th</sup> SPECIAL TACTICS SQUADRON



## MISSION

## LINEAGE

17<sup>th</sup> Special Tactics Squadron

## STATIONS

Fort Benning, GA

## ASSIGNMENTS

## COMMANDERS

## HONORS

Service Streamers

Campaign Streamers

Armed Forces Expeditionary Streamers

## Decorations

## EMBLEM

Per pale Sable and Azure an escutcheon blazoned: Argent (Silver Gray) three conjoined bendlets sinister Azure, Gules and Vert; below in chief a fleur-de-lis Or emitting two lightning flashes chevronwise Silver Gray overall a dagger palewise Sable, all within a narrow border Black. Attached above the disc, a Yellow scroll edged with a narrow Black border and inscribed "EX ID AER PRO ID TERRA" in Black letters. Attached below the disc, a Yellow scroll edged with a narrow

Black border and inscribed "17th SPECIAL TACTICS SQUADRON" in Black letters. **SIGNIFICANCE:** Ultramarine blue and Air Force yellow are the Air Force colors. Blue alludes to the sky, the primary theater of Air Force operations. Yellow refers to the sun and the excellence required of Air Force personnel. The divided background suggests day and night operations. The shield denotes protection provided by the integration of Army and Air Force units as represented by the green and blue stripes on the shield. The red stripe reflects the fire power of the combined forces. The fleur-de-lis stands for weather flight operations. The dagger symbolizes Ranger operations, and the lightning flashes indicate the Squadron's quick striking power.

#### **MOTTO**

EX ID AER PRO ID TERRA--Of the Air for the Ground

#### **NICKNAME**

#### **CALL SIGN**

#### **OPERATIONS**

MSgt. Josh Gavulic inadvertently pulled his reserve parachute ripcord while donning a rucksack in close proximity to an open ventilation door, according to the findings of an Accident Investigation Board, convened following the fatal Feb. 21, 2014, military training mishap. Gavulic, a 16-year veteran tactical air control party member who was assigned to the 17th Special Tactics Squadron at Fort Benning, Ga., at the time of the accident, was taking part in free-fall proficiency training over Eloy, Ariz. Following Gavulic's death, AFSOC convened a safety investigation board to determine the cause of the mishap and recommend measures necessary to prevent a recurrence. The SIB determined safety of flight issues, and released its findings for internal USAF use. Maj. Gen. Mark Hicks, AFSOC's director of operations, chaired the AIB investigation and signed off on its conclusions. The open ventilation door on Gavulic's aircraft was large enough for a parachute to pass through, but not large enough for the "safe passage of a person." 2015

Airmen from the 17th Special Tactics Squadron at Fort Benning, Ga., have been involved in operations in Southwest Asia for more than 5,000 days straight—nearly 14 years. They reached the 5,000th-day milestone on June 27. "Their unmatched commitment and contribution has been astounding," said CMSgt. Jason Quesenberry, a Silver Star recipient who is currently assigned to the 1st Air Support Operations Group at JB Lewis-McChord, Wash. "Five thousand days continuously deployed is amazing for such a small unit. ... They bring an entirely new level of air power expertise to the ground force," he said. The squadron sent members to Afghanistan in October 2001, a month after the 9/11 terror attacks. Airmen from the unit also operated in Iraq during the war there. The 17th STS consists of Tactical Air Control Party airmen who direct combat aircraft providing close air support to ground forces. These airmen operate with soldiers of the Army's 75th Ranger Regiment. Members of the squadron have received more than 80 medals for valor in combat since 9/11. 2015

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Air Force Order of Battle

Created: 19 June 2014

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Sources

The Institute of Heraldry. U.S. Army. Fort Belvoir, VA.

Air Force News. Air Force Public Affairs Agency.